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A N S W E R
T O
E V E R Y M A N

That asketh a
REASON of the HOPE that is in us:
BY WAY OF
Question and Answer.

By JOSEPH HUMPHREYS.

With a Recommendatory Preface

By the Rev. Mr. WHITEFIELD.

Which Things we speak, not in the Words which
Man's Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost
teacheth. 1 COR. ii. 13.

L O N D O N :

Printed and sold by M. LEWIS and SON, in Pater-
noster-Row. 1767. [Price 1d. or 6s. per. Hund.

P R E F A C E:

By the Rev. Mr. WHITEFIELD.

THE Apostle tells us, "There are different gifts, but the same Spirit." And it is with no small pleasure that I frequently consider what a holy variety there is as to their gifts, among those, who, by the world in contempt, are called Methodist-Preachers, and to whom I am in an especial manner connected. Some may be properly stiled Sons of Thunder, while others of them seem more peculiarly to claim the title of Sons of Consolation. One has got the gift of exhortation, while another is more enabled to open properly the scriptures of truth. Mr. HUMPHREYS, the author of the following questions and answers, seems to excel in the latter. I trust they will be blessed to many. They are plain and simple. I think they need no recommendation. Read and judge for yourselves, into whose hands this little Manual may come, and then I doubt not but you will be like-minded, in this respect, with

Your son's well-wisher,



G. W.

THE AUTHOR'S
P R E F A C E.

MY design in publishing this, is to bring a few of those important scriptures to be taken notice of, which are generally over-looked, or at least but little minded by the common people.

They are placed in the following method, that by the blessing of the Lord may strike a greater conviction into the hearts of those that read them. A thing of this kind might undoubtedly be done by an abler hand; but instead of a better let this take place. And let all that love Zion, pray the Lord Jesus to bless it, for the spreading his glorious name and gospel in this cloudy and dark day, If it be owned to this purpose, perhaps I may be encouraged thereby to attempt something another time of the same nature. In mean while I subscribe myself, courteous reader, thy friend and servant, for Jesus' sake,

Chedworth,
Dec. 10, 1743.

J. H.

THE ANSWER
P R E F A C E
A N S W E R, &c.

Q. I Am glad to see you: pray how do you do?

A. By grace I can say, that not only my body prospers, but my soul also prospers.

Q. How spiritual you talk! What you are one of this New Way, are you?

A. This I confess, that, after the way which men call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets. Acts xxiv. 14.

Q. You are what the world calls a Methodist then, I suppose?

A. I trust I am one of those that are called the children of God. Rom. ix. 26.

Q. Will none then be saved beside yourselves?

A. God forbid! for Jesus was slain, and hath redeemed sinners to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hath made them kings and priests unto God. Rev. v. 9, 10.

Q. But I suppose, whatever becomes of others, you do not doubt but you shall be saved?

A. We do indeed live in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. Tit. i. 2.

Q. What

Q. What have you to ground your hope upon?

A. Christ is in us, the hope of glory. Col. i. 27.

Q. Have you got Christ then?

A. My Beloved is mine, and I am his. Song ii. 16.

Q. You not only hope then, but you are sure of being saved thro' Christ.

A. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and tho', after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Job xix. 25, 26.

Q. And do you indeed know that you are a child of God?

A. The Spirit itself beareth witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God. Rom. viii. 16.

Q. How came you by this assurance?

A. By grace, through faith. Eph. ii. 8. We have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, father. Rom. viii. 15.

Q. May I have this gift?

A. Ask, and it shall be given you. Matt. vii. 7. Whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Acts ii. 21. And if we being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Luke xi. 13.

Q. I should like to be one of you, but you are a people so very particular.

A. We are indeed a peculiar people. 1 Pet. ii. 9. A foolish nation, by whom the Lord provokes many others to jealousy and anger. Rom. x. 19.

Q. Pray tell me, what do these that they call Methodists in the church preach?

A. They preach: 1. That there is none righteous, no not one. Rom. iii. 10. — 2. That no man cometh to the Father but by Christ. John xiv. 6. — 3. That Jesus Christ shed his blood for many, for the remission of sins. Matt. xxvi. 28. — 4. That through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins. Acts x. 43.

Q. I find these ministers have not so great a variety in their sermons as other ministers have.

A. Because they are determined not to know any thing among the people save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. 1 Cor. ii. 2.

Q. You mentioned just now the forgiveness of sins. Pray tell me, is there such a thing as having our sins forgiven?

A. There is forgiveness with God. Psalm cxxx. 4. — In Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Eph. i. 7. — As far as the east is from the west, so far hath the Lord removed our transgressions from us. Psalm ciii. 12.

Q. I own this is very happy for those who experience it.

A. Even as David says, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Rom. iv. 7.

Q. But perhaps this was a privilege belonging only to holy men of old, and not to any in these days.

A. We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they. Acts xv. 11. For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. Rom. x. 12.

Q. How

Q. How may we attain to the forgiveness of our sins?

A. The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, Matt. ix. 6. Come unto me therefore, says Christ, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. xi. 28.

Q. But he is now in heaven, and how can we come at him there.

A. You are to understand that the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth. Psalm cxxlv. 18. And though he is now in heaven, yet his hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. Isa. lix. 1.

Q. Perhaps, if a very vile sinner does go to him, he may yet miss of mercy.

A. Him that cometh to me, says Christ, I will in no wise cast out. John vi. 37.

Q. Surely this Lord Christ is very gracious.

A. Indeed he is gracious, and full of compassion. Psalm cxlv. 8. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him. Psalm ciii. 11.

Q. I should be glad to hear something farther of this Christ: for to me he seems to be no common person.

A. Indeed he is none other than God himself manifest in the flesh. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

Q. Did the Almighty God then become a man?

A. The Word was God. John i. 1. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. John i. 14.

Q. How came he to condescend thus?

A. Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

Q. This was great humility.

A. Yes, indeed it was: for though he was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God; yet he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Phil. ii. 6, 7.

Q. And was this the same that died upon the cross?

A. Yes. For being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. ii. 8.

Q. Did God then die?

A. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, 1 Joh. iii. 16.

Q. This is very strange doctrine.

A. Without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

Q. Are we bound to believe that Christ is God?

A. If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins. John viii. 24.

Q. Is the name I AM given to none but God?

A. God said unto Moses, I AM hath sent me unto you. Exod. iii. 14.

Q. But is it certain that this same title belongs to Christ.

A. Jesus said unto the Jews, Before Abraham was, I AM. John viii. 58.

Q. I thought Christ was the Son of God, and not God himself.

A. Christ

A. Christ and his Father are one. John x. 30.

Q. But if Christ was such a divine person, how came he to suffer so much as he did?

A. He suffered for sins.

Q. For whose sins?

A. He was wounded for our transgressions. Isa. liii. 5.

Q. What then he who was innocent suffered in our room who were guilty?

A. Yes verily: he suffered, the Just for the unjust. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Q. But what was this for?

A. That he might bring us to God. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Q. I suppose then that we should never have come to God, if Christ had not died for us.

A. Without shedding of blood is no remission. Heb. ix. 22.

Q. So then, though we are sinners, we can be saved now by Christ.

A. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15.

Q. Are all mankind sinners?

A. All have sinned, and are come short of the glory of God. Rom. iii. 23.

Q. How came all to be sinners?

A. By one man's disobedience many were made sinners. Rom. v. 19.

Q. What is the evil consequence of being a sinner?

A. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. Gal. iii. 10.

Q. But

Q. But sure a man is not cursed, if he is but a very little sinner?

A. Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. Jam. ii. 10.

Q. If this be so, then both I and all mankind are in a miserable state.

A. 'Tis true: men are very apt to say, They are rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Rev. iii. 17.

Q. What then must a person do to be saved?

A. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Acts xvi. 31.

Q. But are we not to amend our lives, and do all the good we can, and so expect to be saved?

A. By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight. Rom. iii. 20. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Rom. iv. 5.

Q. Then we may live as we will, if we do but believe.

A. As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Jam. ii. 26.

Q. Pray what is faith?

A. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. xi. 1.

Q. So then I find, if we have faith, Christ is even now as evidently present to the spiritual senses of our souls as if we had been personally present with him here on earth.

A. Yes

A. Yes indeed. Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. Eph. iii. 17.

Q. So then you have fellowship with an unseen Christ.

A. Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ. 1 John i. 3.

Q. And do you love Him, though you have not seen Him?

A. Whom having not seen we love; in whom though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. 1 Pet. i. 8.

Q. Methinks I should love Him very much, and believe in Him too, if I were to see Him.

A. Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. John xx. 29.

Q. Pray tell me, Why do you love Him, and rejoice in Him so much?

A. Because He has loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Rev. i. 5.

Q. How has He done away our sins?

A. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Gal. iii. 13.

Q. Was Christ then cursed!

A. It is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Gal. iii. 13.

Q. I thought just now you said that we sinners were cursed, and not Christ.

A. All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isa. liii. 6.

Q. But why was He punished, and not we?

A. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. Isa. liii. 10.

Q. Were Christ's sufferings very great?

A. So

A. So great, that his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. Matt. xxvi. 38.

Q. Then I find all we must have perished, if Christ had not died?

A. 'Tis true indeed, that Jesus hath delivered us from the wrath to come. 1 Theff. i. 10.

Q. Since then Christ hath died, I suppose none will perish now?

A. He that believeth not shall be damned. Mark xvi. 16.

Q. Very true: but we ought to hope charitably of people! we hope that we all do believe?

A. All men have not faith. 2 Theff. iii. 2.

Q. But if all have not, I hope the most part have?

A. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Matt. vii. 14.

Q. This is a hard saying, who can bear it?

A. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Matt. xi. 15.

Q. But who can be saved then?

A. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John iii. 16.

Q. I find then that though the gate is strait, yet there is a door of mercy open notwithstanding.

A. The Lord keepeth mercy for thousands. Exod. xxxiv. 7.

Q. Then I need not despair.

A. It is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. Lam. iii. 26.

Q. Pray

Q. Pray tell me, have you obtained mercy?

A. Yes: for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering. 1 Tim. i. 16.

Q. Are your sins all forgiven?

A. God hath forgiven me all trespasses. Col. ii. 13.

Q. Pray who are you, that Christ should love you, and forgive you all trespasses?

A. Of sinners I am chief. 1 Tim. i. 15.

Q. How dare you then to think that Christ regards you?

A. Because he receiveth sinners. Luke xv. 2.

Q. But why do you think that he receiveth you in particular; sure He never told you so?

A. He that believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself. 1 John v. 10.

Q. What is this witness?

A. It is the Spirit that beareth witness. 1 Joh. v. 6.

Q. I wish it is not all delusion.

A. The Spirit is truth; and if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. 1 John v. 6, 9.

Q. But do not many pretend to the Spirit, who are hypocrites?

A. The Lord shall cut such asunder. Matt. xxiv. 51.

Q. How may a person know whether he has the true Spirit, or whether he be in a delusion?

A. Let a man examine himself. 1 Cor. xi. 28.

Q. What are the marks of the Spirit?

A. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,

ness, temperance: and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts. Gal. v. 22, 24.

Q. I do not hear our learned ministers talk so much of the Spirit?

A. God hath hid these things from the wise and prudent. Matt. xi. 25.

Q. We used to call them Quakers, who pretend so much to the Spirit?

A. If any man has not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. Rom. viii. 9.

Q. To whom is this Spirit given?

A. The promise is unto you, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Acts ii. 39.

Q. And who are they that do actually receive the Spirit?

A. He that believeth on Christ, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake Christ of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive. John vii. 38, 39.

Q. Then I find it is the privilege of every true believer to have the Spirit. This is brave indeed! Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

A. I would to God, that not only thou but all that read this, were both almost and altogether such as I am. Acts xxvi. 29. Only without that sin that dwelleth in me. Rom. vii. 20.

Q. Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief.

A. I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Luke xv. 10. Amen. Amen.

